



Public Service Commission

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Rory M. Christian, Chair

Contact:

James Denn | James.Denn@dps.ny.gov | (518) 474-7080

<http://www.dps.ny.gov>

<http://twitter.com/NYSDPS>

22070 / 22-C-0358

Public Comment Sought on Potential New Area Code in 716 Region

Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie and Niagara Counties to Exhaust Supply of Telephone Numbers by Second Quarter of 2024

ALBANY — The New York State Public Service Commission (Commission) is considering a petition filed by the North American Numbering Plan Administrator (NANPA) to overlay a new telephone area code over the existing 716 area code, which includes all or portions of Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie and Niagara counties, to relieve a forecasted shortage of telephone numbers. Comments are due September 18, 2022.

In accordance with standard telephone industry guidelines, NANPA bases its petition on a projection that forecasts the current 716 area code will exhaust available phone numbers in the second quarter of 2024. If numbering resources, now constrained, were to become unavailable, economic activity and the general welfare of those who live in the area could be compromised.

According to the June 16, 2022 NANPA petition, all existing 716 wireline and wireless telephone customers in the overlay area would retain their current 716 area code and telephone numbers, and the new area code would cover requests for new phone numbers. The petition seeks approval of the proposed new area code in time to be implemented six months prior to the projected exhaust date. Demand for new phone numbers is driven largely by the economy and phenomenal growth of new technology that requires an individual phone number, such as cell phones, tablets and other electronic devices.

The implementation of a new overlay area code normally requires concurrent adoption of mandatory 10-digit dialing (the three-digit area code and seven-digit telephone number are required to complete a call) for all calls, whether local or long-distance. However, by the time the proposed 716 overlay area code becomes effective, customers in the 716-area code will already have transitioned to mandatory 10-digit dialing due to the national implementation of the “988” three-digit hotline to reach the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline which is to be completed in July 2022. Therefore, the timeline to implement the proposed area code will be

shorter than in other previous overlay code implementations because certain customer education and industry technical milestones will not be needed.

The full text of the petition and the full record of the proceeding may be reviewed online at the Department of Public Service web page: www.dps.ny.gov. The Commission may adopt, reject, or modify, in whole or in part, the action proposed and may resolve related matters.

Ways to Comment: There are several other ways to provide your comments. Comments should refer to 22-C-0358.

Internet or Mail: Go to www.dps.ny.gov, then click on “Search” and enter 22-C-0358 in the “Search by Case Number” field, and then click on “Post Comments” at the top right of the page or send comments by email to the Secretary to the Commission at secretary@dps.ny.gov.

Alternatively, comments may be mailed to the Hon. Michelle L. Phillips, Secretary, New York State Public Service Commission, Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, New York 12223-1350. All written comments will become part of the record considered by the Commission and may be accessed on the Department of Public Service website by searching the case number, as described above, and clicking on the “Public Comments” tab.

Toll-Free Opinion Line: You may call the Opinion Line at 1-800-335-2120. This number is set up to take comments about pending cases from in-State callers, 24-hours a day. These comments are not transcribed verbatim, but a summary is provided to the Commission. All submitted comments should refer to Case 22-C-0358. Although comments will be accepted throughout the pendency of this case, to ensure timely consideration by the parties, public comments are requested by September 18, 2022. The Commission is also considering holding virtual public statement hearings. If hearings are to be held, the dates and times will be announced.

The Commission’s documents in this proceeding may be obtained by going to the Commission Documents section of the Commission’s Web site at www.dps.ny.gov and entering Case Number 22-C-0358 in the input box labeled “Search for Case/Matter Number”. Many libraries offer free Internet access. Commission documents may also be obtained from the Commission’s Files Office, 14th floor, Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12223 (518-474-2500). If you have difficulty understanding English, please call us at 1-800-342-3377 for free language assistance services regarding this press release.